

Hobbies

Lessons at numismatic convention won't cost a red cent

By Roger Boye

Some of the best things in coin collecting—as in life—are free.

The American Numismatic Association will conduct at least 60 hours of educational programming during its 100th anniversary convention in suburban Rosemont next month, with every session free and open to the public. Topics range from "coin grading" to "Indian peace medals."

Here are some of the highlights. (Except as noted, all sessions take place in East Ballroom 22 and 24 of the Rosemont-O'Hare Exposition Center, 5555 N. River Road.)

- The "World Series of Numismatics" at 5 p.m. on Aug. 14, 15 and 16 in East Ballroom 23 and 25. Ten three-person teams will answer questions "pitched" by Chicago broadcast journalist Donn Pearlman in a competition based on the old television game show "College Bowl." Players include Richard Doty of the Smithsonian Institution,

hobby publisher Chester Krause and Illinois hobbyists Tom DeLorey, August Jackson and Robert Leonard.

Winning teams from the first two nights and a wild-card team will vie on Aug. 16. The eminent hobby scholar Walter Breen—known for his fantastic memory and colorful garb—will review the questions.

- "Consumer Alert Forum" at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 13. This session will focus on efforts of the coin industry to regulate itself—the hobby's hot topic of 1991. Panelists include Barry Cutler, director of the Consumer Protection Division of the Federal Trade Commission and Phoebe Morse, director of the FTC's Boston office.

- "Coin Community Town Meeting on Consumer Protection" at 11 a.m. on Aug. 14 in Room 9 of the Conference Center. Collectors will be invited to tell representatives of the FTC and hobby leaders what should be done to weed out unethical dealers.

- "Legal Rights and Remedies for a Numismatic Consumer" at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 14. David L. Ganz, New York attorney and ANA vice president-elect, will describe how consumers can protect themselves from coin sharks.

- "Basic Grading of U.S. Coins" at 9 a.m. on Aug. 15. ANA authenticator J.P. Martin will discuss how to determine the condition of an old coin.

- "Elementary, My Dear Watson: Numismatics of Sherlock Holmes" by Edward C. Rochette, author and ANA president-elect. 4 p.m. Aug. 13.

- "The ANA-Smithsonian Connection" by Elvira Clain-Stefanelli, chief numismatic curator of the Smithsonian Institution. 5 p.m. Aug. 13.

- "Frontiers in American Numismatics" by John J. Ford Jr., author and numismatic historian. 4 p.m. Aug. 14.

- "The Art of Judging the Art of Ancient Coins" by Harlan Berk, Chicago dealer and ancient coin expert. 2 p.m. Aug. 15.

- "Famous Fakes and Fakers" by Kenneth Bressett, editor of "A

Guide Book of U.S. Coins," author and ANA governor. 3 p.m. Aug. 15.

- "Fun with Errors and Varieties" by error-coin experts J.T. Stanton and Bill Fivaz. 9 a.m. Aug. 16.

- "The Puzzling Origin of the \$ Sign" by author Eric P. Newman. 2 p.m. Aug. 17.

- "Walter Breen Answers Your Questions about Numismatics" featuring the legendary Breen, whose "Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins" has become a hobby standard-bearer. 3 p.m. Aug. 17.

- "The History and Future of American Numismatics" at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 16. This open-ended discussion of the king of hobbies includes Breen, Bressett, Clain-Stefanelli and Q. David Bowers, an owner of Bowers and Merena Galleries, Inc., of Wolfeboro, N.H.

Also, several specialty organizations—such as the Token and Medal Society—will conduct meetings and seminars during the convention. A listing will be available at the ANA registration desk in the North Lobby of the Rosemont-O'Hare Exposition Center.

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Buckingham Fountain and the Chicago skyline are depicted on one side of the ANA convention medal designed by Frank Gasparro, former chief engraver of the United States Mint. The other side includes a standing figure of America with raised arms.

A 2¼-inch bronze medal will be sold at the convention for \$28; a 1¼-inch silver medal and a 1¼-inch bronze medal set will cost \$35. To make a purchase, visit the ANA tables in Exhibit Hall A of the Rosemont-O'Hare Exposition Center.